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Press Release

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ATTORNEY GENERAL DARRELL MCGRAW JOINS NATIONAL FIREWORKS SAFETY EFFORT

Attorney General Darrell McGraw and the United States Consumer Products Safety Commission urge consumers to celebrate the Fourth of July safely by not purchasing illegal fireworks and by adhering to national safety standards when they use legal fireworks.

"We all want to spend our Fourth of July with family and friends, not in the emergency room," said Attorney General McGraw. "The explosive force of illegal fireworks and the hazards of legal fireworks have resulted in severe burns, blinding, amputation, and even death. We must work together to reduce the number of these preventable accidents."

Attorney General McGraw commended the Consumer Product Safety Commission's effort to investigate and prosecute those who attempt to manufacture or sell illegal fireworks. The most dangerous kinds of fireworks, such as M-80s, quarter-sticks, and half-sticks, are banned under federal law. It is also illegal for vendors to sell professional display fireworks to consumers.

West Virginia consumers may purchase "novelty" fireworks, which do not leave the ground. However, they should still be considered dangerous and handled with caution.

Fireworks Safety Tips

NEVER allow children to play with or ignite fireworks, no matter what type. Sparklers, considered by many to be a "safe" firework for the young, burn at high temperatures and can easily ignite clothing.

ALWAYS read and follow all warnings and instructions.

ALWAYS make sure that other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.

ALWAYS keep unlit fireworks away from firing areas.

To avoid potential fire hazards, always light fireworks on a smooth, flat surface away from the house, dry leaves, and other flammable materials.

NEVER try and relight fireworks that have not fully functioned. Douse and soak them with water and throw them away.

ALWAYS keep a bucket of water nearby in case of a firework malfunction or fire.

NEVER ignite fireworks in a container, especially one made of glass or metal.

NEVER experiment with homemade fireworks.

NEVER have any portion of your body directly over a firework while lighting.

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